

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ACCRA 03032 251604Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /083 W

-----251755Z 110128 /45

R 251419Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7654

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 3032

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, EGEN, GH

SUBJ: AFRICAN YOUTH COMMAND WANTS TO BAN PUBLIC OFFICERS FROM TRADING

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTS THAT S.S. BAFFOUR-AWUAH, NATIONAL SECRETARY OF AFRICAN YOUTH COMMAND (A NEO-NKRUMIST LEFTIST GROUP), HAS CALLED ON GOG TO BAN ALL CATEGORIES OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND THEIR WIVES FROM PARTICIPATING IN COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES. HE SAID THIS ONLY WAY TO ELIMINATE TRADE MALPRACTICES IN GHANAIAN SOCIETY AND NOTED THAT COLONIAL GOVT. HAD BANNED CIVIL SERVANTS FROM PARTICIPATING IN COMMERCE ON GROUNDS THEY CONTROLLED APPATUS OF ECONOMIC POWER. "TO USE THIS POWER TO GAIN ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES WOULD BE THE HEIGHT OF CORRUPTION AND SOCIAL INJUSTIC," HE PROCLAIMED, AND AND SPECIFICALLY CALLED FOR AN EMBARGO ON PUBLIC SERVANTS, "INCLUDING OFFICERS IN THE ARMED FORCES," FROM USING THEIR POSITIONS TO AMASS WEALTH AT EXPENSE OF THE NATION. BAFFOUR-AWUAH SUGGESTED THAT GOG SET UP MORE SMALL-SCALE SHOPS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO SUPPLY GOODS DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE AND THUS REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A FEW POWERFUL INDIVIDUALS TO GAIN TRADE MONOPOLIES.

2. COMMENT: WHILE THE AFRICAN YOUTH COMMAND USUALLY STRIKES A PURITANTICAL POSE, THIS ATTACK IS UNUSUALLY POINTED AND HARD-HITTING. MOST SENIOR ARMED FORCES OFFICERS, AND PARTICULARLY
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PAGE 02 ACCRA 03032 251604Z

THEIR WIVES, ARE HEAVILY INVOLVED IN TRADE: THE ACHEAMPONGS ARE A PRIME EXAMPLE. SOME OF THIS TRADE IS ABOVE BOARD BUT MUCH OF IT HINGES ON QUESTIONABLE OR ILLEGAL PRACTICES SUCH AS GRANTING CRUCIALLY NEEDED IMPORT LICENSES ON A BASIS OF FAVORITISM. IN ADDITION, RAKEOFF ON COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS ARE COMMON. SENIOR OFFICERS, ESPECIALLY THE MORE CORRUPT MEMBERS OF THE SMC/NRC, HAVE BY THESES MEANS AMASSED ELEGANT

HOMES AND NUMEROUS MERCEDES-BENZ'. THEY WILL NOT ABANDON
THESE LUCRATIVE PRACTICES JUST BECAUSE THE AFRICAN YOUTH
COMMAND TAKES THEM TO TASK, BUT THE FACT THIS ORGANIZATION
CAN LAUNCH SUCH AN ATTACK WITH IMPUNITY SUGGESTS IT
BELIEVES PUBLIC OPINION IS ON ITS SIDE. IT WILL BE
INTERESTING TO SEE IF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS NOW TRY TO GET
ON THIS BANDWAGON.
SMITH

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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